



Innis Herald

Vol XV No. 4

December 1981

Urban Upheaval

by Fred Mott

In recent weeks, Innis has been the focus of an unusual amount of publicity. Both the *Varsity* and *The Newspaper* have printed stories about the controversy over the resignation of Professor Alan Powell. The resignation is in protest of the treatment of a part-time professor at Innis, David Hulchanski. Innis Principal Dennis Duffy verbally told Hulchanski that due to budget cuts, he was going to discuss the staffing of two Urban Studies courses with the Geography Department. One of these is Dr. Hulchanski's, and the other is one that Hulchanski is teaching this year and is interested in retaining now that he has completed his Ph.D.

A great deal of the controversy centers around the interdisciplinary nature of the courses, which are part of the Urban Studies programme based at Innis. According to Hulchanski, interdisciplinary studies are "Innis' reason for being." If Geography staffs these courses, both of which are "core" courses in the programme, the independence of the courses is threatened. The dangers of borrowing staff from other departments are two-fold: (i) the geography Dept. may withdraw its staff at any time and if Innis is dependant on this staffing arrangement, it will have problems. (ii) if one department has considerable control over the nature of a course, its interdisciplinary balance is at stake. If a policy of cross-staffing comes to Innis, other courses are in danger of disappearing and other part-time teachers are in danger of losing their jobs.

Another major concern is that the democracy of Innis is in danger. The *Varsity* printed a story that quoted Powell as saying that Principal Duffy's tactics endangered the college. Dr. Hulchanski worries that there is some behind-the-scenes maneuvering and that the principal is acting against college policy when he talks to the Geo-



Urban Studies: more than just geography

graphy Department independently about cross-staffing. While Duffy states emphatically that there is no college policy on this procedure, Hulchanski says, "Academic Affairs must discuss all policy on staff."

Although a movement was made on council to censure Duffy, it was not discussed. According

to Hulchanski, "more time is needed to put things into focus....The movement to censure Duffy was hasty and extreme." He adds that one must be fair to Principal Duffy and that the *Varsity* has allowed things to get out of proportion." After all, according to the memorandum sent out by Richard Stren, the chairman of the Urban Studies Programme Committee, the principal does have the authority to act on the appointment of staff. Duffy has no comment on the issue of his censure. As he puts it, "the less said, the sooner mended."

The future of the staffing problem is now in the hands of a sub-committee of the Urban Studies committee made up of three students and three staff. Dr. Hulchanski is pleased with this arrangement and will respect the decision of the committee, as will Principal Duffy. The sub-committee will report to the Urban Studies committee, who will pass a resolution advising Duffy of their final position. The whole affair will then move on to Academic Affairs who will vote on the issue, and then go to the College Council for a final vote.

Dr. Hulchanski has not received written notice and the decision appears to be in the hands of the various groups mentioned above. "The healthy thing is that we know about the issue," says Hulchanski, and he adds that something is being done about it. The unhealthy things include the need to make these cuts in the first place, the loss of Professor Powell, and the bad publicity that Innis, its staff and its principal, has received from this. There seems to be no hard feeling and there is genuine progress towards the establishment of college policy in answer to this problem. The move that is finally made on this issue will serve as precedent for future cases. We can only hope that budget cuts will not have to result in the loss of either interdisciplinary courses or staff at Innis.

They did what ?!

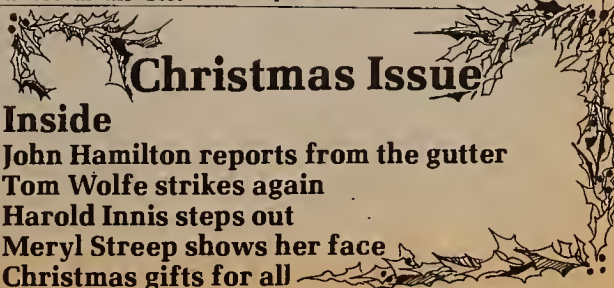
It has recently come to the attention of the Executive of the Innis College Student Society that certain people or groups of people are engaging in various activities that are not in keeping with the intended purpose of "Recreational Space," as intended by the House Committee. Stated more bluntly, you people are conducting yourselves in a manner that would be

considered vulgar, atrocious even by the standards of those who live in the fo'c'sle of a Norwegian whaler. These blatant acts of moral decay, illicit perversion, sedulous practices, etc. must desist immediately, or the sternest countermeasures will be put into effect.

We believe, rightly, that these reasonable requests are in the best

interests of all members of the Innis Community, and we trust that all who have been conducting themselves in such a manner as to be considered to be included among those referred to above, will take the appropriate steps to rectify their conduct, the better to ensure that their behaviour will, from this point on, conform to that expected of a responsible adult in this University community.

If you were unable to understand what was said above, it means: No Sex in the Pit, please.



Christmas Issue

Inside
John Hamilton reports from the gutter
Tom Wolfe strikes again
Harold Innis steps out
Meryl Streep shows her face
Christmas gifts for all



On the Streets

J. Hamilton

Jimmy gets up early. The morning sun comes through the window of the car and wakes him up. He's usually back on the corner by 7:30.

The Evangel Hall isn't open yet. Breakfast at the Scott Mission isn't until 10 and the wine store doesn't open until 10 either. Not much to do. Maybe he'll have a smoke and watch the people on their way to work. They seem to be in such a hurry. Jimmy's not in a hurry. He ain't going nowhere.

Matter of fact, he's been there and back. Yep, "walked across Europe, buried eighteen of my friends in one afternoon and made a cross for every grave." That was a long time ago. He's been out of the army for fifteen years now. Hasn't done much since, except hang around on the corner. He used to be a corporal, 48th Highlanders.

Up at the 'Scott' he has a good breakfast. Soup, meat, vegetables and desert. One meal like that will keep a man going all day. It's usually the only one he has.

He sees a few of the other 'boys' he knows. Wilson, the big Indian; Monk, cross-eyed and bald headed, and the Professor. Now there's a queer duck. Smokin' cigar butts in that funny little brass pipe. And the way he's dressed, golfing hat, green plaid jacket, pink shirt and red tie. He's a pretty fancy dresser 'cept he ain't changed his clothes in a couple of months. He's an educated fella, you can tell that by the way he talks. Been to college and all. Used to be a teacher, a highschool principal they say, till his wife and kids were killed. He was driving.

Cheques, cheques, cheques. Everybody's talking about that cheque. It's the end of the month and they're all broke. Jimmy's smart. He's got a little something put away. Not like these other guys. They get a cheque and they think they're big wheels. Taking taxis to the wine store, tipping everybody, buying from the bootlegger at twice the price when the stores are closed. Then, come the end of the month, what are they doing? Bummin', that's what. And drinking that Lysol. Poking holes in the bottom of the can and mixing what comes out with water and drinking it. Wilson near went blind from doing that.

Jimmy heads off on his own after breakfast. If that bunch knew he had any money they'd be following him around like hungry dogs. "Hey Jimmy, let's get a bottle eh. Cover me till I get my cheque. I'll pay you back double. C'm on Jimmy, I need a drink." Everybody's your friend when you got a dollar.

He stops in at the Evangel Hall, where he has his D.V.A. (Department of Veteran's Affairs) cheque sent. Only men who sustained wounds are entitled to a D.V.A. cheque. Jimmy was wounded twice. Once in the head and once in the leg. 75% disability. He's even got his picture in a book at the library. Standing there young and proud with a machine gun in his hand. Northern Italy it was. He carries a dog-eared xerox copy of the photo and shows it to people when he's had a couple.

The minister at the hall doles out Jimmy's money in bits throughout the month. Ten bucks here, five bucks there. For cigarettes or a paper, but not for booze. "Not for booze is it, Jimmy." They sell coffee at the hall for a dime or you can play cards. Jimmy doesn't gamble.

"I'll sketch a picture...a portrait...but gamble, I never do. I like a drink. I'll admit this, I like to eat, I like a good drink...but there's nothing wrong with that...is there?"

With Jimmy

Today the minister finds a couple of the boys in the washroom passing the bottle around. He gets mad and throws everyone out. Closes the place down for the day. It's early afternoon, night as well head over to the wine store, see Ma and pick up a bottle.

Ma's been working at the same store for over thirty years. She's seen 'em come and she's seen 'em go. Remembers back in the war when you had to use ration coupons to buy a bottle. And all you could get was port. Winos don't drink much port. Too sweet. They drink sherry. 'Bout three ten a bottle.

"Hi Jimmy how ya doin' still sleeping in that car."

"I've got a sleeping bag. Sleep right on the snow."

"It's a tough life."

"It's a good life."

"Do you like it?"

"Well, I don't like it but I, uh, can't do nothin' about it."

"The usual? You don't want it cold."

Jimmy takes his Derby sherry and says goodbye. It costs a nicker more but it's what he likes. A man has to have his pleasures. He stashes the bottle down his jacket sleeve. Don't want none of the young punks seeing it. They'll walk right up and take it off you. Or if they've got one of their own they'll say,

"Hey Jimmy, come on, let's go down the alley and have a drink. I don't like to drink alone." Then soon as they get you down the alley, bingo, right on top of the head. Take your money, your bottle, whatever they can get.

Jimmy heads to the park where he'll drink on the quiet. Don't want the coppers seeing either. It's a fifty-six dollar fine if they catch you. Not that anyone ever pays. Some guys save them all up and go to jail for the winter. Jimmy ain't into that. Don't like being caged up.

Time passes. Jimmy walks the street. Sees a few of the regulars. Not many. Time was when he could walk to Yonge Street and back and not go half a block without running into somebody he knew. That's all changed now. He hardly sees anyone he knows. There's a whole new bunch moving into the neighbourhood. Young kids, with money.

Jimmy buys another bottle just before the store closes at six. He stands on the corner and watches all the people he saw in the morning hurrying off to work, hurrying home in the opposite direction.

Round about nine, his bottle almost gone and his head feeling light, he decides to head back to the abandoned car he sleeps in and have a rest. There's a real chill in the air. It's gonna be a cold night.

But there's something going on. He gets to the car lot and there's cops and fire trucks all over the place. One of the cars is blazing away to beat the band. Ain't it the one The Newf's been sleeping in? Christ, hope he ain't inside.

He wonders what it's all about, but tonight he ain't asking no questions. He just clears out thanking the good lord that he ain't inside there. Tomorrow he'll hear all about it.

Everybody'll be saying the Indians did it. Torched the car cause The Newf owed them money. They all got together in the summer and bought a car. Put it in The Newf's name cause he was the only one with a license. They only got as



Hanging out. Photo by A. Kyba

far as Whitby before they ran off the road — drunk. They were headed back to the coast. Cops impounded the car. Still got it.

The Newf had the last laugh though. He wasn't in the car. He left for Niagara Falls the day before. Staying with the old queer priest he used to live with in Toronto.

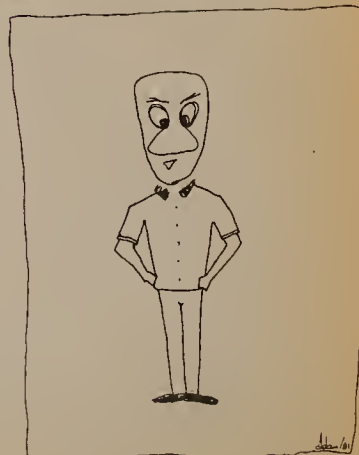
Indians probably didn't do it anyway. They just got blamed for anything that happens. Kids did it probably.

Tonight Jimmy don't care. He knows for sure he can't sleep in his car. The Heat'll be all over the place. It's gonna be damned cold too.

Well, he's got a few extra bucks. What the hell. He heads up to the steam bath. They'll let you stay there all night for three bucks. He stays on the ground floor. Doesn't go upstairs or down to the basement where all that funny business goes on. He don't want any part of that.

Jimmy takes a final pull from his bottle and tosses the empty away. He pays his money and goes into the little cubicle he gets for it. It's warm inside. He stretches out on the bench.

Something ain't right. He gets up and takes his coat and sweater off. He lies down again, using his sweater for a pillow and his coat for a blanket. It feels good. So what if it costs three bucks. A man's gotta have his pleasures, don't he?



SURE, TURN THE PAGE THROUGH THE MAGAZINE ON A COFFEE TABLE, USE IT TO START A FIRE, SEE IF I CARE I BUT I DARE YOU I JUST DARE YOU TO PIN ME UP I DARE YOU!



GOOD PROTECTS DRINKS AND LITTLE CHILDREN

Editorial

Practice and Principal

Some short time ago we received an unassuming booklet entitled *Report of the Principal 1979-1981* which starts out by saying, "To read the Reports of my predecessors constitutes an exercise in humility." It seems that there is little to report on now that the college has "established" itself.

Duffy certainly maintains a "complex viewpoint" throughout, an approach that he feels is important in this Report. As an "outpost" in this institution, the conditions and "larger drives" of the centre (which we took to be Simcoe Hall and the Faculty of Arts & Science, although this is all posited in a particularly rambling metaphor of ancient maritime empires) must be considered in an assessment of Innis' situation.

There are apparently four issues that have, to a greater or lesser degree, been raised over the past two years. The first three seemed to us to be non-issues. 1) Since Innis has little to offer multi-faculty students besides "style", Innis will no longer be a multi-faculty college. (But y'all kin keep on comin' t'hu pub.) 2) The problem of residence and co-op housing—whose it is and who gets to live there—has been recognized and is being attended to. 3) More space is needed and we might get it, but we might not.

And then we come to that terrible creature, the Kelly curriculum, who breathes only fire at Innis. An immediate effect on independent courses is due to the limited number of non-specialist electives that students are allowed to take. Furthermore, because of the new academic requirements, the Innis-based programmes (Urban, Environmental and Cinema Studies) all offer specialist certification now, but can't guarantee students that they will "remain in place long enough for completion of the requirements."

Students can't count on courses which are now degree requirements to reappear in the calendar.

This is due not only to budget cuts at Innis, but the fact that interdisciplinary courses (necessitated by the very nature of the programmes) are at the mercy of other departments' budget decisions.

Duffy notes that Cinema Studies is more insecure than the other two programmes whose "core" courses are supported by the Innis budget. And yet it was those core courses in Urban Studies that the recent commotion was about. It seems that Duffy thought they could be better handled by the Geography Department.

And then the Varsity headline: *Innis Students Censure Principal*. That was all a bit more smoke than fire. A big almost, but people do get excited, especially when things are so generally hunky-dory and "established" and issues are rare. But cut-backs are a reality, and financial decisions are inevitably going to have to be made that will have significant effects on Innis' academic offerings and on the college itself. It is perhaps a good thing that the decision-making policy at Innis was brought into question at this time.

Even if our destiny is shaped by various outside bodies as Duffy claims, a viewpoint shouldn't get so complex that inner perspective is lost.

Duffy's action of independently approaching another Department about staffing changes, without taking the matter first to the Academic Affairs committee, inspired students to move to censure him. A word perhaps a little too strong when a reprimand was more in order, but it was feared to be a case of double vision getting things somewhat blurred. College policy is undoubtedly one of the ongoing priorities that should be identified and maintained before the "concerns pressing on those seated elsewhere" are taken into account.

The Innis Herald is published monthly by the Innis College Student Society and printed at Weller Publishing Company Ltd. The opinions expressed herein are attributable only to their authors. Letters to the editor should be addressed to The Editor, The Innis Herald, Innis College, 2 Sussex Ave., Toronto, Ont. M5S 1J5



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Letters

Miscellaneous Missive to the Editor

Hi there. You probably don't know who I am. That's just as well. I'm writing this epistle in the hope that the reading of the same may, in some small way, cause your day to be a little less dreary. (Pompous little bugger, ain't I?)

Anyway, I'm sitting here, staring at my bedroom wall, a bottle of Labatt's I.P.A. in one hand and a typewriter in the other. Figuratively speaking, that is. And I'm racking my brains trying to think of something to poke fun at. I mean, all of the really good topics have already been used up: Trinity College, (all bookworms and/or transvestites), York University, (a High School with ashtrays), Dennis Duffy, (nice guy, wrong planet), the ICSS "Executive", (Bredovsky, Palmer, Funnell, and some V.P. Government who changes weekly: a sorry bunch of apprentice politicians learning how to shovel it with the best of them). Anyway, the point that I'm trying to make is that there is not much left that is suitable for a literary opus of this nature.

Except....
 Now, don't get your hopes up, it's no big thing, but I'll run it up the proverbial flagpole nonetheless, and see who salutes it. Ready? Here it is: IRREGARDLESS. I put it in capitals, so you can get a nice big eyeful of it. Pretty stupid word, isn't it? Believe it or not, I walked past Rm. 116 the other day, and some dumb cluck

was arguing that this miserable excuse for a word actually existed! No wonder they can't do anything to prevent a fees increase; if they can't get their designer-jean-encased rear ends off of the chair and engage in something a bit more constructive.

Mind you, given the average mental capacity of most students today, I can't say that I'm too surprised. "Surprise" is hardly the first word that springs to mind when today's students are the subject matter for discussion. "Disgusting" is alot closer to the mark, (not to mention "pathetic"). In my humble opinion, today's students seem to fall (read "stumble") into one of three groups, each more detestable than the other two. They are, in no particular order: Preppies, Hippies, and the blessedly few Pseudo-Scholars.

Preppies: acene-free, Lacoste under pinstripe shirt, khaki pants, Sperry Topsiders on feet (no socks), private school education (probably U.C.C. or Havergal, not U.T.S.), use Dad's or Mom's VISA card at least four times/weekly, usually found at Wymilwood discussing the best recipe for a Bloody Mary or Pina Colada. Avoid them.

Hippies: No-name jeans (more patches than denim), John Lennon glasses, elastic band holding back hair, Army jacket with Peace sign on

back, and SolidaritywiththeOppressedPeople-ofElSalvador slogan wedged between the lips, carrying "You Say Regan, I Say Ray Cunn; Let's Call the Whole Thing Off" placard. Supposedly common around Innis, but I've seen more of them at the Trinity Buttery than in the Pub. Prescription: ignore them.

Pseudo-Scholars: these are the ones who seem to float ephemerally around the campus, clutching (not reading!) works by at least three of the following: Proust, Freud, Marx, Hume, Heg-Ayn Rand, or Margaret Atwood. Topics under discussion will include: Cordon, Peter, Brian, or Margaret. On their level, that means Pin-sent, Ustinov, Bedford, and Thatcher, but to hear them talk, you would swear that they were referring to Lightfoot, Sellers, Trotter, Trudeau. It's best to limit any contact with this species to the minimum required by the situation. If all else fails, just pour warm Export into their Cappuccino, and they'll leave without a struggle.

Anyway, looking back on this verbose compendium, I realize that I haven't said a great deal about anything. Probably just as well. It's been alot of fun, but I'm out of beer, and my typewriter ribbon is about to die, so I'll sign off now. Beam me up, Scotty.

Who the Hell was Harold Innis?

M. Freiman

"Who the hell was Harold Innis?" The opening lines of the Innis College song is an accurate and pointed reflection of the current awareness of Innis' thought.

Like a number of important Twentieth Century thinkers, Innis is largely unread today, with his reputation depending largely on cocktail-party type name dropping which tends to identify Innis either as an alter ego for Marshall McLuhan (himself largely unread and widely misunderstood) or as a nationalistic economic historian who wrote about beavers and codfish.

Even among academics (who presumably have read his works) Innis is cited to bolster startlingly diverse and mutually contradictory positions. Apparently there is a "technological determinist" Innis, a "staples theory" Innis, an "economic nationalist" Innis, an "oral tradition" Innis, a "value theorist" Innis, and several others besides.

One important recent article draws close parallels between Innis' approach and that of Marx, while another—perhaps less distinguished—article identifies him as a disciple of Adam Smith. One line of argument quotes Innis to establish the need for domestic economic sovereignty, while another assumes that a necessary implication of his work is the impossibility of effective Canadian national sovereignty in an era of electronic communications. The explicators of the early, "political economist" Innis plead theoretical incompetence to deal with the "later" communications theorist, while those who cite the work on communications have apparently either never heard of Innis' work in Canadian economic history, or consider it irrelevant.

So who the hell was Harold Innis?

In his recently completed doctoral thesis, John Watson, who was formerly associated with Innis College and is now working in Africa, appears to provide a challenging and useful answer to those who ask the question seriously.

Even before its completion, Watson's thesis began to acquire something of an underground reputation as a landmark study. That reputation is fully deserved. When the thesis is published—as it inevitably will be—it will force a general re-examination of much if not most of the current thinking about Innis.

At the centre of Watson's thesis is the proposition that Innis' work is *not* fragmented, diffuse or unfocused. Watson sees Innis' entire work as coherent, consistent and unified. The unifying factor is to be found in the relationship between Innis' work and his biography, specifically with reference to his position as a "marginal man"—marginal because Innis was Canadian, marginal because his family was rural and Baptist, marginal because he was an academic intellectual.

Adopting the Sartrean concept of the "project," Watson sees Innis' life and work as an attempt to make sense of the world from this marginal perspective, and (if I understand Watson's argument correctly) to make this marginality "central". By this I mean that Innis' work appears to make a marginal position (and an acceptance of this marginality) a prerequisite for an understanding not only of the margin itself, but also of the centre of metropolis. In its boldest form, this proposition would translate into an assertion that not only is it impossible to understand Canada and Canadian history except by using theories whose origin is in the Canadian experience (this is Innis' argument in *The Study of Economic History in Canada*, an early work) but also that it is impossible to acquire any wisdom about the "metropolis" except from an intellectual position at the periphery of that metropolis (his argument in *Minerva's Owl*, a late work).

If Watson is right—and clearly there will be considerable debate as to whether he is—then it is possible to see a unifying thread running through all of Innis' writing, and also throughout his involvement in academic politics in the Department of Political Economy and the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto.

The "early Innis" uses a specific economic methodology adapted from Canada's distinctive experience (the so-called "staples theory") to explicate Canadian history and development. Institutionally, he insists that Canada must develop in its own intellectual tradition and that this depends on staffing Canadian Universities with Canadian academics. Building on these positions, Innis' writing then begins to focus on the interaction of Canada (and similar marginal societies) with the metropolis. In view of the unfortunate effects (both intellectual and practical) of metropolis-oriented theories and of the economies that produce them, Innis proposes an older, non-pragmatic, "balanced" intellectual tradition of Greece.

From here it is a relatively short step to an application of some of the conceptual tools which had earlier been applied to the Canadian reality (e.g. the influence of geography, climate, technology etc.) to a study of this oral tradition, its predecessors and successors. This study culminates in Innis' linking of the technological characteristics of the dominant means of communication of a given society to the "bias" of this communication, and hence to what a sociologist of knowledge would call the "world view" or

"intellectual hegemony" of that society.

The further contention that it is only through the study of these "biases"—a study which is only possible at the margins of power—that the distortions caused by these biases can be understood and possibly corrected, brings the entire argument full circle and focuses attention back squarely on Canada and on the University. It also illuminates the significance of Innis' struggles as Director of the School of Graduate Studies and as Chairman of the Department of Political Economy to make the University of Toronto a world class institution.

This schematic and over-simplified outline is mine, not Watson's and any defects should not be attributed to him. Watson's is a much more detailed and elegant exposition. It spans several hundred pages of careful, closely argued presentation, integrating a much wider range of Innis' intellectual interests and institutional activities (as well as details of his personal biography) into the pattern of his "project".

There is certainly room to disagree with Watson about individual contentions and conclusions, but the overall pattern which he presents is massively persuasive. If nothing else, it makes it virtually impossible to justify the partial, disjointed, and consequently often dismissive, readings of Innis which now occupy much of the field. It also makes it difficult even for those academics who are generally well-disposed towards Innis' position either with regard to political economy or with regard to communications theory, to continue to ignore the "other half" of Innis' work. Economic nationalists who place themselves in the Innisian tradition will be hard-pressed to continue to ignore the implications of the "later Innis". Even more decisively, "global villagers" who purport to trace their arguments through McLuhan back to Innis will find themselves faced with fundamental difficulties arising from the totality of Innis' work. It seems clear that this is a work that will cause many academic ripples.

Whether any of this will filter down to the level of cocktail-party name dropping is perhaps open to question. If Watson's thesis sets off a chain of re-examinations both of Innis' work and of its relevance to current issues in history, economics, culture and communications, more students in more classes may find themselves actually reading Innis. On the other hand if Innis' pessimistic predictions about the fate of his concept of the University tradition prove valid (and certainly little that has happened in the years since Innis' death has contradicted these predictions) then a unified and coherent Innis may prove to be no more "practical" or "popular" than a fragmented one. In that case "Who the hell was Harold Innis?" will become a hostile challenge to the Innisian tradition rather than an honest question about it.

Professor Freiman teaches a new INI course, *The Life and Thought of Harold Innis*.



Where is He?

The Harold Innis Foundation is a registered charitable foundation associated with the College. In addition to buying, developing and maintaining Innisfree Farm in Ottaville (birthplace of Harold Innis), it has always been active in fostering interest and activities which further the scholarly work of Innis himself. Each year the Foundation distributes a report on its programme. This following article is part of the forthcoming Report 1981 which is currently in preparation. Compiled by members of the Foundation's editorial board, it details several of the new areas now being explored in Innisian studies.

A growing body of academic publications testifies to the renewed interest in Innis' work and ideas. A brief outline of some of these writings will show the extent of this interest and some of the principal areas of research.

Christian's *The Idea File of Harold Adams Innis* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980) has been followed by his edition of

Innis on Russia: *The 'Russian Diary' and Other Writings* (1981). Innis on Russia is the first in the Foundation's series of monographs on Innis-related themes. The second monograph in the series will contain Eric Havelock's reflections on Innis and the University of Toronto during the 30's and 40's. A selection of the articles of W.T. Easterbrook, whose writings have articulated and extended Innis' analytical-historical framework, has also been assembled, and it is hoped that it will soon be possible to arrange for its publication.

Work is continuing at the University of Toronto Archives on the duplication of the roughly 1000 pages of Innis' "A History of Communications" that do not appear in the 1400-page microfilm version of the unpublished manuscript. The microfilm version begins at Chapter IV, and the 1000 pages of typed and holograph manuscript material constitute the "missing" Chapters I to III. Once they are duplicated, the task of reconstructing their internal organization

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Review

Cool Cubes from the Kool-Aid Vendor

by Catherine Russell

Most of us take notice of architecture only when it is in some way remarkable. This generally means either when it is new and original, or antiquated and rare. We don't give much thought to "normal" architecture, the kind that dominates our cities, the shapes that reappear in every skyline and on every block. There is a form that is so common that we rarely stop to evaluate it, just because it's so prevalent that it would be like judging trees.

To use Tom Wolfe's words, these are boxes which are white & light & clean & lean & spare & bare. Factories and schools, skyscrapers and houses everywhere are flat-topped boxes which may not be pretty, may not be pricey, but sure are functional.

It is an aesthetic form which we have come to accept as "bourgeois mundanity," and it comes from a fundamentally socialist stance taken by European architects early in the century. In *From Bauhaus to Our House*, Tom Wolfe traces the original concept through its capitalist corruption, to our eventual ensnarement within its very walls.

He treats this irony with a bit of a grin. Anyone familiar with Wolfe's writing knows that he has a way of bringing fairly common social phenomena onto a well-lit stage, on which real people become characters and an exposition becomes a story. As in *The Right Stuff*, where the astronauts were stripped down to mere mortals, the architects who took architecture from Bauhaus to our house, are not simply names.

"Bauhaus" is the name of a School founded in Germany in 1919 by an architect named Walter Gropius. The key words were "starting from zero", the ideal was "non-bourgeois," the aesthetic principle was "expressed structure," and the clients were The People, i.e. workers. Stark and basic all the way.

The Bauhaus School also established the tradition of the architectural compound. In a figurative rather than physical sense, the term refers to a working environment in which architects would collectively uphold a manifesto, and not only stick to it, but direct their creative energy towards the maintenance of its principles, i.e. worship it.

From such a system, "Gods" inevitably emerge. Wolfe refers to men such as Gropius, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Breuer, the central figures in the compounds set up in Europe before the war, as "White Gods." Their favourite colour was white, their favourite shape was a block, their materials were all raw and cheap; their buildings were, above all, naked architecture.

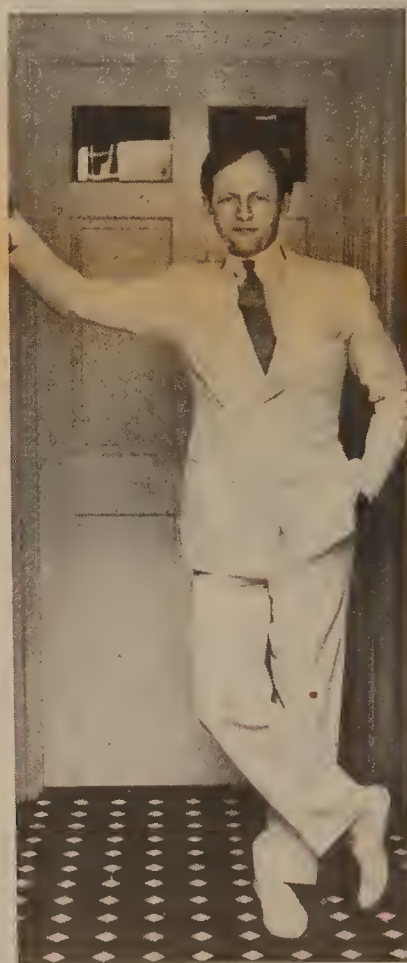
The war transplanted the White Gods, their manifestoes, and their "cool cubes" into American Universities.

As for the compound taboos concerning what was bourgeois and nonbourgeois, these soon became the central nervous system of architecture students in the universities, as if they had been encoded in their genes.

Not that American architects were particularly concerned about the proles and their ideology. It was just something new, exciting, and...European. And so they churned out "Yale Boxes" which very soon became synonymous with good taste. Wolfe's description of the American bourgeois' appropriation of this highly theoretical style of architecture, how imitation and repetition were sanctified in the guise of The Aesthetic, and how the capitalist idolization of the White Gods managed to distort the very principles behind the style, is great.

He describes something like the Barcelona chair, designed by Mies van der Rohe, one of the greatest Whites of them all, as,

The Platonic ideal of chair it was, pure Worker Housing leather and stainless steel, the most perfect piece of furniture design in the twentieth century. The Barcelona chair commanded \$550, however...When you saw that holy object on the sisal rug, you knew you were in a household where a fledgling architect and his young wife had sacrificed everything to bring the symbol of the godly mission into their home.



Tom Wolfe in perspective

This style, this *mode*, this look which was The Look, became so popular that it ennobled all possible progress in the art. Frank Lloyd Wright and his style that had only just emerged, was forced to take a back seat. Clients, i.e., megabuckicians, wanted compound architects, followers of the Gods, because they would do it right, and the compounds, now the universities, were so fearful of venturing near the forbidden

bourgeois, that they kept making glass boxes with unconcealed structure. Decoration could go no further than grids and pipes and steel beams, which were not ornamentation, but the purest expression of the meaning of architecture. They kept it up because "they could do nothing else."

Wolfe chronicles the attempts that have been made to break out of this limiting aesthetic tendency, which have naturally been academic efforts to modify the tenets behind it, rather than practical constructions. Besides the fact that drab brick-and-concrete-and-glass boxes are cheap, the recent recession in building (since the 70's) has restricted architectural competition to pure theoretical battles. The fact that the architect no longer listens to the client not only means no more "mooring mast on top of the skyscrapers" (the Empire State Building: how utterly bourgeois!), but that an architect must establish himself on paper, intellectually, to be recognized and get commissions.

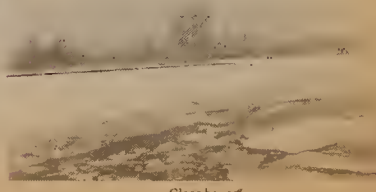
During the war other disciplines such as music (Schoenberg) and psychology (Freud), appropriated European concepts at the expense of American ingenuity, but by now have recovered. Perhaps because of its basic visibility, architectural forms are more firmly embedded in ideology, and are therefore harder to uproot. The Book leaves us in Post-Modernism, which, as Wolfe points out, is not a particularly encouraging label, giving the impression that something has been superseded, but without stipulating any new direction.

From Bauhaus to Our House is not exactly a criticism of the "cool cube" mode of architecture, rather an explanation of how we got stuck in the glass box. Wolfe reserves aesthetic judgement and includes photographs of not only structures born of the White Gods, but also the attempts of the Apostates or deviants who were piddling around outside the compounds.

In pursuing the idea of the effect popular fashion has on aesthetic form, one wonders whether he isn't pushing aside other factors, though. He refers once to a "vicious circle" of economic and decorative limitations. The stark and simple approach is so economical, that to build anything different would be "expensive", and besides, there are not the craftsmen there once were to provide applied decoration—they had disappeared because they were no longer needed. These two aspects of architecture seem to me to have more socially determined significance in the domination of one architectural form.

This is a minor point, though, and doesn't really detract from his explanation of the contradiction that is so prominent in America, between the complexity of its culture, and the baldness of its buildings. He sticks to the facts without going overboard (the book is only 150 pages), but brings the facts to life.

From Bauhaus to Our House makes one more aware of architecture generally. You look around and you see Yale Boxes everywhere, but you also see where originality comes in, because architecture is, after all, an art form, or can be. Tom Wolfe also makes one aware of just how much of an impact intellectual fashions can have on society and how popular culture can affect even our visual environment.



Glass boxes

Another Look at the French Lieutenant's Woman

by Daphne Ballon

Is anyone else tired of Meryl Streep?

As a cover girl she's better than Bo Derek, but hardly the miracle actress of the decade. All the same, she is impressive. She's a talented performer in a field that tends to value body over heart, head, or soul. Streep manages to evoke all three. She gives off an aura of intelligence combined with humour and pathos. Yet she's pretty enough that you don't mind looking at her.

Not built to be a sex goddess, she has played roles that require a certain complexity: the small town girl in the "Deerhunter," the wife-in-the-wrong in "Kramer vs Kramer," the neurotic lesbian in "Manhattan." Her latest role is less successful. Somehow she does not click in "The French Lieutenant's Woman."

Streep has a wide range of talents (she can cry like nobody else) yet Pinter's screenplay asks her to keep them in check. Both the screenplay and the direction are more concerned with cinematic devices than the elements of a good story.

From advertisements everywhere we are inundated with the sight of Meryl emoting tragedy and doom from beneath a dark cloak. Yet though the "French Lieutenant's Woman" purports to be a romance, it is remarkably devoid of feeling. We are asked to believe in a passion so strong that it lasts for years, nourished only by



Streep: no Bo

the crashing of the waves and heart rending sighs.

Arguably, this could be the mood of the novel as well. Fowles was concerned with elements of the Victorian era as much, if not more, than the story itself. Yet on this score the movie fails as well. The camera glosses over important social comment, specific detail. Whores remain extras contained in the background; filth and dirt is an aspect of the set rather than a way of life.

Such crude elements would interfere with the aesthetic quality of the film, they would take away from the basic production concept which was the idea of a story within a story.

Pinter has written a scenario which

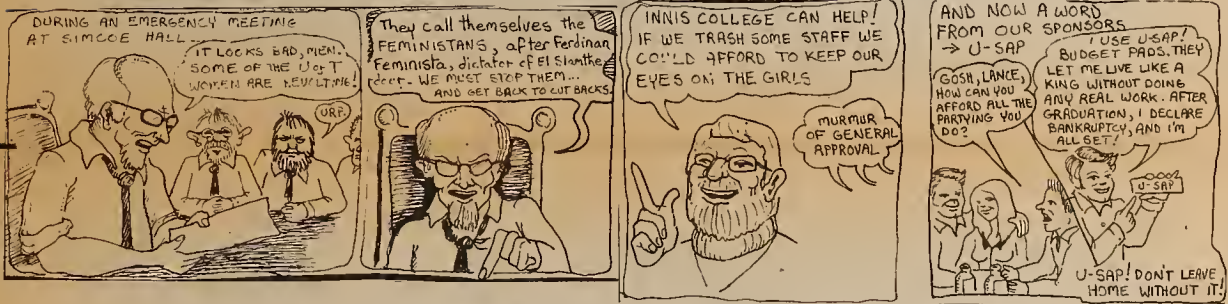
deliberately reminds us that this is only a story. He creates an interplay between the woman in the Victorian era and the woman who performs this role for a movie. Streep alternates between a long fuzzy red wig and a short bobbed "modern" look. It's a film about a film. A fiction about a fiction. The landscapes are beautiful but contrived, the gestures studied rather than real.

The nineteenth century love affair between two characters is dramatic but unbelievable; the twentieth century love affair between the leading lady and the leading man, is believable but insipid. Nabokov defines a true masterpiece as a "work of magic." No magic occurs here, just clever technique, polish rather than feeling.

To return to Meryl Streep. Her acting is not at fault. Her performance is impeccable according to the direction she was given. She was asked to act the role, not to live it. We are never permitted behind the mask. Streep's forte as an actress is her ability to portray, simultaneously, the behaviour and the feeling which provoked the behaviour. She never plays just one level but multiple levels. Director Karel Reisz, however, was only interested in the facade.

Streep is not good at enigmas. She's good at something she can get her teeth into.

In a recent magazine article, Meryl Streep noted that she wished for the purposes of "The French Lieutenant's Woman," that she could be more beautiful. This comment is illuminating and perhaps the crux of the issue. The role did not require talent, it required a quality. Nadia Kinski, who is low on skills but remarkable to look at, would have been much more appropriate.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BENEFIT EVENTS ON CAMPUS

COFFEE HOUSE in aid of Amnesty

International

December 4th

8:00 p.m. to midnight

The Newman Centre

Admission: (nominal)

— exact price not available

Entertainment.

BENEFIT CONCERT in Honour of the Imprisoned Members of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group — proceeds to go to Amnesty International

December 11th

8:00 p.m.

Convocation Hall

Admission: \$5.00.

"Imprisoned Voices of the Ukraine", featuring Canadian Opera Company soloist, Roxolana Roslak, with readings from works by imprisoned Ukrainian writers by R.H. Thomson and others. Artistic Direction by Marco Carynnyk.

cont. from 5

has been completed, our understanding of the whole scope of Innis' "communications" project should be considerably enhanced.

Tom Cooper's Toronto Ph.D. thesis, *A Comparative Study of Innis and McLuhan*, has recently been joined by John Watson's valuable thesis entitled "Marginal Man": *Harold Innis' Communications Works in Context*. Also to be mentioned is William Christian's "Harold Innis as Economist and Moralist" which appeared as Occasional Paper #2 of the Department of Political Studies of the University of Cuelph (Winter, 1981, 15 pages).

One of the most encouraging signs of renewed interest in Innis' work is the extent to which it has become a focus of debate among historians and political economists, the object of critical attention both sympathetic and hostile. W.J. Eccles' "belated review" (sic) of Innis' *The Fur Trade in Canada* in the *Canadian Historical Review* for January, 1980 has elicited a critical response from Hugh Grant, which is scheduled to appear shortly in the same journal. The new journal *Studies in Political Economy* has devoted its sixth number (Autumn, 1981) to the theme "Rethinking Canadian Political Economy," and critical analyses of Innis' work from various Marxist or Marxian perspectives figure prominently in a number of the articles. The issue is certain to stimulate debate, and is also valuable because the articles mention much of the recent research in the Canadian "political economy" tradition pioneered by Innis.

There are signs that the rebirth of serious interest in Innis' work which paralleled and contributed to the revival of the political economy tradition is now entering a second phase. The level of analytical sophistication in the best work has increased markedly, and many themes that are implied but relatively undeveloped in Innis' work have been articulated, challenged or extended in recent years.

Finally, further material that bears on the development of Innis' thought may yet be found, and Foundation members may be of direct assistance in locating it. Surviving correspondence and lecture notes from Innis' courses have considerable value, and donations to the Innis Reading Room of such material (or of xeroxes of it) will be actively welcomed. There is also a need for a Finding Guide to Innis Source materials and for a canvassing of archives and individuals in Canada and elsewhere, in search of portions of Innis' correspondence that form part of the papers of other scholars and administrators.

The outlook for Innis studies is decidedly promising, and the Foundation can continue to contribute actively to their development.



What You Want for Christmas

From the flood of entries we received in our Massive Collage-wide What Do You Want For Christmas Contest, we present to our readers these two winning descriptions. We can't guarantee that they'll get what they want, but we can offer our photographer, Mr. Adelman, to Miss Yoon. Both winners will receive \$10.00, but if FLOODGATE doesn't supply an address (and surely they wouldn't), Miss Yoon will get the whole \$20.00.

My Christmas list this year consists of one request which is not unique to myself, but is extremely large in magnitude and expense. The donor is society, and the purchasers are all of its members. My request is that the spirit and intent of this festival be recognized. The spirit of this celebration lies in the teachings of a man who died two thousand years ago. This individual spent his life spreading the message that all are equals in the management of earth and partners in the distribution of its gifts.

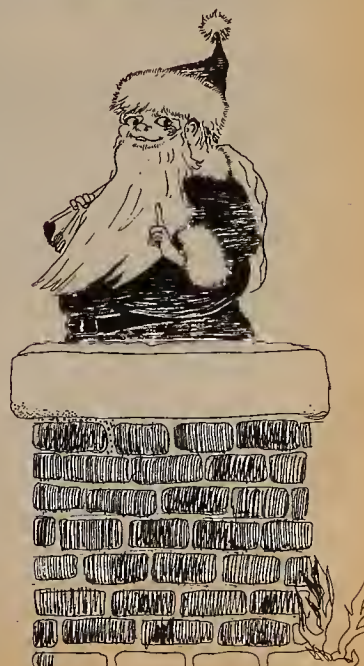
Christmas is a celebration of shared bonds, and a rejoicing in the love which emanates from these ties. In our society the common means of expressing these feelings is the exchange of tokens or gifts, as symbols of affection and conductors of spirit. In our segment of the global village the tokens are often luxurious, and our life is comfortable both during and surrounding the season of festivity. The realization which I am seeking is a recognition of the power and meaning of our shared bonds, in our own families and circles of friends, and in the lives of all members of our global village.

Our comfort and our unchained sense of love during the Christmas season is a product of the breaking of bonds and the depravation of comfort amongst other members of our community of spirit. The sensation of loss in the severing of bonds and unity in the family of a refugee of war or famine is no less meaningful or important than tragedy in our own lives. Our sense of relaxation in the knowledge that our needs have been satisfied is unique to a small percentage of our world's population. Therefore, I wish to request that when we celebrate the bonds which we embrace, the cries from those whose bonds have been broken and whose lives have been shattered must be heard and appreciated.

FLOODGATE

My needs are simple. For Christmas this year I want a man. A nice clean one, toilet trained, with good posture. Good posture is very important. My mother says that a man with bad posture always gets sick in middle age and sick men are boring. The man should be interesting but not too well educated. My mother says that education ruins a man; they get uppity and won't listen to a word they're told. The man should be warm and loving. And he must give very good hugs. There is nothing better than a good hug after a hard day's work. And dear Santa, I know this is asking too much, but if he could cook, I'd be in heaven. Really, I'd never bother you again. Of course I realize that good men are in short supply. Please don't send a cheap make.

J. Yoon



Submissions for the Innis Herald are Welcome and Needed

Cartoons	Fiction
Features	Artwork
Photographs	Reviews

There is an Innis Herald submissions box in the I.C.S.S. office. Please fill it up: fiction, photographs, reviews, artwork, suggestions.

Next Deadline January 11

What They Want

These people didn't enter our contest for whatever reasons (we're sure they're good), but if they did, this is what we expect they might have wanted.

FUZZ... "Tenure"

DAVID KING... A part in a Ken Russell film.

K. RUSSELL... To be told by someone that they actually read the Herald.

JOE MEDJUCK (on another sabbatical in Los Angeles)... A shitload of fresh Canadian air.

PIERRE ELLIOT TRUDEAU... A little house in Montreal he can call his own, where he'll be King

BILL DAVIS... Peace on earth, good will to all and maybe less provincial subsidies for non-essential items like post-secondary education, student aid, public transit and motherhood

ART EGGLETON... A button that says "I am in charge"

JOHN SEWELL... To be in charge or Art Eggleton's job.

PAUL GODFREY... A new brain to go with his new jam and new hairdo.

Joe Clark... Paul Godfrey's excess chin.

DAVID CROMBIE... Stilts.

BOB RAE... Ontario

ED BROADBENT... Canada

HAROLD BALLARD... New Jersey or his own planet

JIM COUTTS... A job

DAN HEAP... A seat in the Senate or a new bike, without training wheels

ALAN POWELL... Customers in his restaurant

REV. MOON... Nirvana and a lot more money and merchandise.

Here's hoping everyone gets what they want and no-one gets what they deserve. Have a Merry Christmas.



the Innis goaltender was superb to the end of the game. This is a great achievement after such a disappointing start to the game. The Innis team lacked any morale after their shaky start.

The refereeing in this game was the major interest. Not only was the game virtually stopped by the constant whistles, but the referees, despite their apparent care for the players' safety, refused to allow the Innis manager onto the ice to attend to injured players. This happened twice and it infuriated the fans and team alike. Such an obvious hypocrisy, it was shrugged off by the head of referees, who was on hand. He thought the player was faking it. This is outrageous and a



very dangerous practice. I hope that this situation is remedied quickly as we don't want any serious injuries to occur. Any referees reading this should take note. We want to see hockey, not referees calling penalties, and we want injured players to get immediate attention, no matter how minor their injury.

On a more cheery note, there was a marked increase in the number of Innis fans at the game, and we were louder than the crowd from Pharmacy, which outnumbered us two to one. There was even a kazoo on hand in true Innis spirit. I hope that there will be yet more fans for the next game. Bring your kazoo.

Innis Hockey

by Fred Mott

The Innis hockey team now has a record of 4 and 2. Their latest defeat came against a superior team, Pharmacy. They lost 5 to 1 after improving their record to 4 wins and one loss against Trinity last week. Pharmacy won the game in the first few minutes of play when they went ahead 3 to 0. From this point on it was the referees' game and little happened to help either team play hockey, let alone Innis catch up and defeat Pharmacy. It should be mentioned that